

# **DAVID: THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART**

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These are teaching lessons you can use for children or adults. For each of these sessions I have included an article teaching about the time in the person's life. Read this so you know the material and can teach it to others. Following is a page of questions to ask those you are teaching. This helps those who are learning to understand and apply what you have taught. It also keeps their interest and helps them remember the information in the future. You can read the questions or make a copy to give to each person. There is also a copy of the questions with the answers giving to help you as you teach. You can add to these answers or change them in any way you want.

I have pictures you can print to use or show on an electric device. This helps people to picture what is happening and remember it. It makes the story come alive. You can show the picture to those you are teaching and give them paper and pencil to draw it while you teach. Or you can make a black and white copy of the picture for them to color. To get these pictures email me at [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net) and tell me which set you would like and I will email them to you as an attachment.

If you have any questions or comments please contact me at [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

# 1. THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART

## **1 Samuel 16:1-13**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

The Bible never flatters its heroes. It tells us the truth about each one of them in order that against the background of human breakdown and failure we may magnify the grace of God. Sins are not glossed over, neither are they glorified. As we look at Bible characters, we find ourselves looking into a mirror. Great has been our failure, but greater still has been His faithfulness. Paul put it this way: "These things happened to them (Bible people) as an example, and they were written for our instruction" (I Cor. 10:11).

While there is much in the Bible in the way of theology, principles and teachings, it is seeing these truths acted out in the lives of Bible characters that helps us really understand them. No one's life is more helpful and instructional than David. He mirrors all of us.

**DAVID'S** name appears 1034 times in the Bible. Almost half of the books mention him. You must read all or part of 66 chapters to get an overall picture of his life. Creation has 2 chapters, Abraham 14 chapters. David is best known as "a man after God's own heart" (I Samuel 13:14). His actions weren't always as God would have them be, but his heart was truly for God his whole life. David's life is like a compass needle that wiggles but keeps coming back to north.

**SAUL** was the first king of Israel. God didn't want them to have a king -- He was their king. They insisted, and He warned them it would bring disaster (I Sam 8:5, 18-22). Sometimes God lets man learn things the hard way and this was one of those times. Saul was chosen by the people because he was tall and handsome. They didn't care about character, just appearance. God is more interested in character. Character is what you are when no one is watching. Outer appearances can be deceiving, it's what's inside that really counts!

Saul failed because he put himself before the people. When his own son Jonathan led the Jews to victory against the Philistines, Saul in jealousy made a crazy law that anyone that ate or drank before the end of the battle would be put to death. Jonathan had no knowledge of this law, and when he broke it his father would have killed him if the soldiers wouldn't have intervened. Saul just used people for himself, then dropped them -- even family. Then Saul was guilty of presumption. He offered sacrifices which only a priest could do. In his pride he put himself above the law of the land, seeing himself as an exception to the laws others had to obey. Finally he disobeyed God by not destroying all the enemy and livestock. Then, to make it worse, he lied and tried to cover up his sin. He blamed others (I Sam 15:22-23). As a result of these sins God took the kingdom from him and gave it to another (I Sam 15:28).

**DAVID IS CHOSEN** by God, whereas Saul was chosen by the people (I Sam 16:1). Samuel thought it was one of David's older brothers, for they were tall and good looking (1 Sam 16:2-6). God made His priorities clear, though, when Samuel wanted to anoint David's oldest brother. "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (I Sam 16:7). David is then anointed king, but it'll be awhile before he sits on the throne.

When we look at David we see just why God chose him, what inner traits God valued in David and still values in us today. This is what it means to be 'after God's own heart.'

**DAVID IS CONTENT** to stay and take care of sheep. He isn't jealous or impatient. He is willing to wait for God's timing. This is one of the inner traits God so greatly values in His servants.

**DAVID IS HUMBLE** after he is anointed. This special privilege doesn't go to his head nor make him proud. He hasn't tried to elevate himself or impress others, and that is one of the reasons God chose him. Even today God looks for inner godly character traits for His servants (I Tim 3:1-11). We must cultivate these same inner qualities in ourselves instead of working on outer appearances and external ways of impressing people.

**DAVID IS FAITHFUL** in little things before God gives him larger ways of service. He was faithful as a shepherd. He wasn't sitting around waiting for God to give him some nice, juicy job. He faithfully worked behind the scenes, doing whatever God wanted him to do. Jesus said "Whoever wishes to become great among you shall become your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all" (Mark 10:43-44).

**DAVID IS WILLING** to do whatever God would have him do. He was willing to leave his sheep, his home and his family when God called. He was available to be used by God in any way God wanted to use him. That's what God wants of us today, too. He doesn't care about our ability (outside), just our availability (inside).

**DAVID IS PATIENT** in awaiting God's timing in being king, too. He had years with the sheep, playing his harp for King Saul, and many years running and hiding from Saul. It can be hard to wait, to be patient for God's timing. Moses didn't wait but moved in his time and ended up with 40 years wasted in the desert. David knew he couldn't make himself king, and that if God wanted it to happen He would have to bring it about. He was willing to wait for God's timing.

Contentment, humility, faithfulness, willingness and patience -- these are what God looks for. God looks inner traits, not outer. That's why He chose David instead of Saul. That's what He wants from us today, too. He doesn't look for sinless perfection, for David was as sinful as Saul. He looks at our heart (I Kings 14:7-8). What does He see when He looks into yours?

Remember, appearances are deceiving. Don't focus on them in judging others or evaluating yourself. Don't try to impress others by your outer appearance. Inner means more. A young officer who was blinded during the war met and later married one of the nurses who took care of him in an army hospital. One day he overheard someone speaking about himself and his wife: "It was lucky for her that he was blind since he never would have married such a homely woman if he had sight!" He rose to his feet and walked toward the voices, saying, "I overheard what you said, and I thank God from the depths of my heart for blindness of eyes that might have kept me from seeing the marvelous worth of the soul of this woman who is my wife. She is the noblest character I have ever known; if the shape of her features is such that it might have masked her inward beauty to my soul, than I am the greater gainer by having lost my sight." Make sure you, too, focus on inner beauty and not outer beauty (Prov 31:30).

# **1. THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART**

## **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Who did God want to be the King of Israel?

Who was the first human king of Israel?

What kind of a king was he?

Why did God choose David to be king instead of his older, taller and stronger brothers?

How does 1 Samuel 16:7 apply to you today? But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

If David would be living near you today, do you think you'd like to have him for a friend? Why or why not?

How do you think David felt when he was anointed king while still a teenager? Did he get bossy and proud?

David had to wait a long time to be king,. How patient are you when you need to wait a long time for something?

Tell about a time you had to wait a long time for something. What was it? Was it worth the wait?

Why does God make us wait instead of giving us everything we want as soon as we want it?

# 1. THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART

## QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

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Who did God want to be the King of Israel?

He wanted them to follow Him as their king, but they insisted on having a human king so they could be like everyone else. They thought that being like others their problems would end, instead they got much worse.

Who was the first human king of Israel?

Saul.

What kind of a king was he?

He put himself before the people and disobeyed God by offering a sacrifice which only priests could offer. Then he lied to cover up his sin. He was not a good king.

Why did God choose David to be king instead of his older, taller and stronger brothers?

God looks at the heart of a person, not what he looks like or what he can do. God knew that David loved Him and was committed to obeying Him. That is the most important thing to God.

How does 1 Samuel 16:7 apply to you today? But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

God doesn't care how much money we have, what we look like, how we do in school, which skills we have, how important our family is what kind of a job we have. He isn't impressed with how many friends we have or where we live. He only cares that we love Him and are committed to obey Him in all things. When He sees that in us it makes Him very, very happy.

If David would be living near you today, do you think you'd like to have him for a friend? Why or why not?

David was kind to everyone. He was humble and cared about others.

How do you think David felt when he was anointed king while still a teenager? Did he get bossy and proud?

He humbly thanked God and tried to serve Him in all He did.

He was patient in waiting for God's timing for him to be king.

David had to wait a long time to be king,. How patient are you when you need to wait a long time for something? **Answers will vary.**

Tell about a time you had to wait a long time for something. What was it? Was it worth the wait? **Answers will vary.**

Why does God make us wait instead of giving us everything we want as soon as we want it?

If He did that we'd be spoiled and selfish. He wants us to trust Him and rely on His timing. Patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

## **2. FIGHTING GIANTS GOD'S WAY**

### **1 Samuel 17:1-54**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Everybody likes to cheer for the underdog. We pull for the tortoise to beat the hare. We cheer for the underdog in sports. Why? It's so easy to identify with the underdog. We all feel that way from time to time in life. That's why we pull for the underdog. The Bible is full of underdog stories: Daniel and the lions, his friends and the fiery furnace, Moses at the Red Sea, Joshua and Jericho, Elijah and the prophets of Baal and Mordichi and Naaman. Perhaps the best known and loved is the story of David and Goliath. David's victory over the giant gives hope for all us little guys as we face giants in our lives.

**THE CRISIS It was larger than life.** For generations the Jews were oppressed by the Philistines. The Jews were no match for them because the Philistines had iron and giants. Only with God's help would they ever win. During the time of Saul things got particularly bad. It seems each arm was drawn up on opposite sides of a canyon that was as much as 20' deep (I Sam 17:1). Each army taunted the other to attack, for whoever attacked would be at a very severe disadvantage. To break the stalemate without endangering their whole army, the Philistines, who were the aggressors, decided to send their best fighter to take on Israel's best fighter. This was common practice among the city-states of Greece, where the Philistines originally came from. It kept whole armies from being wiped out. In battle even the victor's army was weakened and prey to other armies.

The champion the Philistines sent out was a giant named Goliath (I Sam 17:4), a descendant of the giants that were in the land when Joshua conquered it (Josh 11:22) and one of the reasons the Jews were afraid to enter under Moses 40 years earlier. He was over 9 feet tall and wore armor that was almost 200 pounds (I Sam 17:4-7). Humanly speaking there was no way any of the Jews could face him. We, too, face giants that are way too strong for us: cancer, bankruptcy, divorce, addiction, rejection, fear, loneliness, sin patterns, etc.

**It defies our power.** Not only are these giants present in our lives, but they seem to taunt and challenge us, mocking us for inability to remove them. This is what Goliath did to the Jews (v. 8-11). They felt helpless and powerless. Indeed, in themselves they were! Without God sending a deliverer they would never prevail (v. 12-15).

**It will not go away.** Since they were unable to defeat Goliath in their own strength the Jews just hoped he would go away, but he didn't (v. 16). You can't ignore a giant that is challenging you. They don't go away. Marriage problems don't just disappear. Rebellious teens don't just outgrow it. A friend making destructive choices isn't going to just wake up. That sin which keeps defeating you isn't going to just go away on its own. Giants need to be attacked and destroyed in God's strength (I Sam 17:17-27).

David immediately seized up the situation as the powers of darkness challenging God and His people (v. 26). He didn't look at his own resources and compare them to the giant, He looked at God's resources compared to the giant. The giant was big, but God is much bigger (I Jn 4:4). But before he can remove the giant he has to deal with opposition from his brothers.

**THE CRITICS They are obsessed with the trivial.** David's brothers mocked and criticized him for what he was about to do (v. 28). They should have supported him, but they were either jealous, guilty or just bitter inside. They were more concerned about the sheep than David!

**They believe the worse about people.** Even worse, they unfairly and inaccurately attributed self-centered motives to David (v. 28). Don't you hate it when people accuse you of wrong motives? Aren't you glad God knows the truth?

David handled it the only way those things can be handled -- he ignored the talk and went ahead with what needed doing (v. 29-30). Even Saul criticized him (v. 33). He didn't fight them, nor did he let them distract him from the job he knew God needed him to do (Prov 17:14).

**THE CONTEST David used God's weapons.** David remembered God's past deliverances against a bear and a lion (v. 34-37) so he knew God could do this, too. It's important to remember what God has done for us and others in the past and not just think of the present or future. The greatest work of God for us was on the cross. If He could have victory there He can and will have it now!

David refused to fight the giant the world's way -- with Saul's armor (v. 37-39). We can't fight the giants we face in the world's way, either. Things like bitterness, pride, anger, forcing our way, sneaky things, etc., won't work. God's weapons are spiritual, for it is really a spiritual battle we face (Eph 6:10-18). It isn't the cancer or bankruptcy as much as it is Satan behind it using it to defeat and discourage us. That's the real battle. That's why we, too, need God's power to fight. The fruit of the flesh is fear, worry, anger, etc. But the fruit of His Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22-23). That's what He expects us to have to fight back with against discouragement and fear. These seem laughable to the world. But then so did a sling shot and a stone.

A sling was a string with a leather pouch in the middle. Both ends of the string were held while the pouch was swung in a circle, gaining momentum. Then one string was released and the other held, allowing the stone to fly free. Actually David had five stones. Why? There were four other giant relatives of Goliaths (II Sam 21:15-21). David had to be ready for them all. God had him fight them one by one at future times, though. He couldn't worry about future giants at the moment, but had to be prepared for them nonetheless. One at a time, though.

**David refused to be intimidated.** David's giant tried to intimidate him (v. 41-44), to fill him with fear. Fear is one of Satan's biggest tools to defeat us. Even a small problem can become a giant when viewed with fear. Don't let your giants intimidate you. Face them in Jesus' name and strength (v. 45) not your own. Have faith in God's power as being greater than whatever you face (v. 46-47). Make sure God gets the credit (v. 46-47).

Don't run from your giant. There comes a time to boldly attack in God's strength and He will give the victory! That's what happened with David. He used what little battle skill he had -- slinging stones. One could be quite accurate with a stone (Judges 20:16) but there was no guarantee the stone would hit its mark. It was David's job to do his best, to face the giant and give it his best shot. From when the stone left the sling, though, God took over and made sure it hit its mark. We aren't to hide at home, simply praying, when its time to face our giants. We do our best, trusting that God will take it and use it for His glory and our victory. That's what happened with David (v. 49-54). If there is a giant in your life, face it in God's strength (Lk 9:1).

## **2. FIGHTING GIANTS GOD'S WAY**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Why were the Jews afraid to fight Goliath?

What kinds of things do you fear today?

Why did little David think he could defeat this giant?

Will God always protect us from anything bad that can happen?

Why did David's brothers and others criticize him because he trusted God?

Has there ever been a time when people criticized you for trusting God for something? How did it turn out?

God often uses children or young people to set an example of faith for adults. Can you give an example of this?

Why didn't David use Saul's armor and weapons?

Was David afraid when he faced Goliath?

Why did he use a slingshot to kill Goliath?

## **2. FIGHTING GIANTS GOD'S WAY**

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Why were the Jews afraid to fight Goliath?

He was bigger than them and they thought he would kill them. They didn't trust God to win.

What kinds of things do you fear today?

Answers will vary. They will include fear of pain, failure, rejection, criticism, being hurt, sickness, death, darkness, being lost or alone, etc.

Why did little David think he could defeat this giant?

He knew God wanted him to fight Goliath and not be afraid. God had helped him defeat a bear and a lion (1 Samuel 17:34-37) so he knew could and would help him defeat Goliath.

Will God always protect us from anything bad that can happen?

No, sometimes he has a purpose in allowing difficulties to come, like with Job. He is always able to protect us, but that isn't always his will. The 3 Jews knew this when they went into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:17). God is always able to deliver, but He isn't always willing because He knows that what will happen will be best for us and for His Kingdom in the long run.

Why did David's brothers and others criticize him because he trusted God?

Perhaps they felt guilty for not trusting God themselves. People don't like to see others succeed where they failed. A young boy fighting Goliath would show the grown men that they were cowards. They didn't like that.

Has there ever been a time when people criticized you for trusting God for something? How did it turn out?

Answers will vary.

God often uses children or young people to set an example of faith for adults. Can you give an example of this?

Answers will vary. Read Matthew 18:1-6. Children and youth often set examples of faith by their trust and obedience. They can help adults follow Jesus because of their faith.

Why didn't David use Saul's armor and weapons?

He was too little and couldn't use them. He didn't need them.

Was David afraid when he faced Goliath?

He probably was, but his faith in God was stronger than his faith.

Why did he use a slingshot to kill Goliath?

He learned to use it to protect his sheep. It was something he was good at. He did his very best using all his skill and practice to kill Goliath. He didn't just stand there and let God do it all. However God used David's doing his best and made sure the stone hit the mark. When we do our best while trusting God then He will use what we do and make sure it accomplishes what we want.

# **3. GET READY, GET SET . . .**

## **1 Samuel 18:1-4; 22:1-2; 24:1-21**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Most of the things we learn in life we learn the hard way -- through experience. The Bible is full of teaching and others can add personal experience, but it seems most wisdom is gained through daily life experiences. God trains and prepares His servants for service by sending them to the school of hard knocks. It seems some things can only really be learned by practical life experiences. Life experiences show us our own limits and our need of God. Even Jesus had to learn by experience: "He learned obedience from what He suffered" (Heb 5:8). The same was true of David.

God had called and anointed David to be king. However it is a big jump from the sheep pen to the throne room! Even though David was sincere and very committed in his faith, he still needed training to be the king of Israel and to rule them as a man after God's own heart. David had some hard lessons to learn in the school of life experiences.

**1. PEOPLE WILL DISAPPOINT** Immediately after David killed Goliath Saul started wondering who he was and trying to find out information about him (1 Sam 17:55-58). What made that so bad was that David had been in Saul's court as an armor-bearer and to play his harp to soothe Saul (1 Sam 16:14-22). How do you feel when you go out of your way to help someone and they forget you, don't even remember you? David had to learn that what he did was to be done unto the Lord because God wanted him to do it and it was the right thing to do. As a leader David couldn't count on people's appreciation and thanks. He could not afford to get in the pattern of doing things to impress people. No leader can really lead that way. The same is true of us. To serve God we must learn to not depend on people's approval and to not do things to impress or please people.

**2. A LOYAL FRIEND IS VERY VALUABLE** Evidently Jonathan had been listening to his father's questions. He remembered David and reached out in friendship, giving David clothing and armor he would need in the court. This friend made David's transition to court life much easier (1 Sam 18:1-5). Sometimes we think God might not be listening to us or helping us, but if He has provided a good, loyal friend He has provided a wonderful blessing. We only learn how important a good friend is by life experiences -- that's when we need a friend.

**3. WORLDLY SUCCESS IS FLEETING** David's time in the court didn't last long, though. Saul got very jealous of David's popularity (1 Sam 18:10-12). God was teaching David that he couldn't depend on security in job or position. That's an important life lesson, and the sooner learned the better. No matter how great a job is, it's not our security. Only God is.

**4. PUT GOD BEFORE LOVED ONES** One of the rewards for killing Goliath was Saul's oldest daughter, but he gave him his other daughter, Michal, instead. First he said David would have to kill 100 Philistines as a dowry, hoping David himself would be killed. Instead he killed 200. Saul tried to capture David in his home with Michal but he was able to escape. Michal wouldn't come with him, though, and married another man who seemed to have better prospects at the moment. David is showing David that He must be first, even before family and loved ones. Sometimes taking a stand for him alienates one from their loved ones.

Because he had to flee for his life he also lost his best friend, Jonathan, for they couldn't be together any more (1 Sam 19:1, 41-42). He had to stay away from his mentor, Samuel, too, or Samuel's life would be in danger. David lost his job & position, his wife, his mentor and his

best friend. All he had left was God. God wanted these experiences to teach David to trust Him more. Unfortunately David didn't do so well. He lost his relationship with God, too.

**5. SINFUL FEAR DEFEATS AND DESTROYS** Fear is one of Satan's best tools, and it worked to perfection on David. He decided to take matters into his own hands to meet his needs, and then when that backfired tried to cover up his sin, making it worse. This began a sin pattern in David that he would repeat over and over, culminating with his sin with Bathsheba.

He ran in fear to take refuge with God's enemies, the Philistines (I Sam 1:10-15). When they discovered him there he came up with a plan to cover himself and avoid the consequence of his sin. He pretended he was insane, acting crazy and letting his saliva run down his beard. Ancient people believed those who were insane were 'touched by the gods' and wouldn't harm them. What a humiliating position for David to be in! He fled to a cave and hid (1 Sam 22:1).

**6. BE CONTENT NO MATTER WHAT** How appropriate that David was trapped in a dark, damp, lonely cave. Isn't that where we put ourselves, too, when we take matters into our own hands and then try to cover up our sins when things don't work out like we want? Self-pity, depression, discouragement -- what awful, lonely, dark caves they are!

God used that cave to bring David to repentance (Romans 8:28). David soon saw his self-centeredness and independence. He confessed them and returned to God. Read Psalm 142, for David wrote it about what he learned in that cave. He learned to trust God and be content, even if it means losing job, mate, mentor and friend. Losing them is no reason to lose God, too. It took some hard life experiences to teach this lesson to David.

**7. FORGIVE THOSE WHO HURT YOU** Word of David spread throughout Israel and before long many who were discontented with Saul or threatened by him also fled to hide with David (I Sam 22:1-2). Saul had really hurt lots of people, including David. To be a good king David had to learn to forgive and not use his power to get revenge. He learned this the hard way, too, for when Saul was within his reach David did something to hurt Saul (I Sam 24:1-7) and soon regretted it. He repented of it and promised to never do it again. Revenge is never as sweet as it seems it will be. The sooner we learn to forgive instead of being bitter, the better we will be (Rom 12:17-21). This, too, is one of those lessons we must learn from experience.

**8. LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES** Thus God is using these life experiences to teach David to trust Him and put Him before anyone and everything else in life. There were necessary lessons to learn to be a king after God's own heart, and God put David through a long training period to learn those things. God does the same to us today. Learn from them.

**9. PASS YOUR LESSONS ON TO OTHERS** David passed his knowledge on to us, too, to help us as we go through life experiences today. That's why he wrote it down for future generations. Pass on what you have learned to your children and others around you. That won't replace learning by life experiences, but it will make the lessons easier and quicker.

### **3. GET READY, GET SET ...** **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Saul forgot who David was, even though he has played his harp for him and helped him in other ways. How do you think David felt when Saul didn't remember him?

How do you feel when you go out of your way to help someone and they forget all about you?

How do you think Jesus feels when people forget about Him despite all He does for them?

Do you ever forget about Jesus and not think about Him or thank Him for all He does for you?

What should you do when you realize you have forgotten about Him?

David did have a good, loyal friend in Jonathan. Why is it important to have a good friend who will always be a friend no matter what?

In what ways is Jesus like a best friend?

Following God meant that David's wife, Michal, left him. What should we do when someone we love leaves us because we are following Jesus?

David had to forgive Saul and others who hurt him and tried to kill him. Is there anyone you need to forgive but haven't?

David had been anointed king, but for 14 years he had to run for his life and hide in caves. Why did God allow that to happen?

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Saul forgot who David was, even though he has played his harp for him and helped him in other ways. How do you think David felt when Saul didn't remember him?

He probably felt bad, not appreciated and not important.

How do you feel when you go out of your way to help someone and they forget all about you?

Answers will vary.

How do you think Jesus feels when people forget about Him despite all He does for them?

He feels sad and left out because He loves us and wants to be close to us.

Do you ever forget about Jesus and not think about Him or thank Him for all He does for you?

Answers will vary.

What should you do when you realize you have forgotten about Him?

Confess your sin (1 John 1:9) and accept His forgiveness. Then do your best to remember Him.

David did have a good, loyal friend in Jonathan. Why is it important to have a good friend who will always be a friend no matter what?

Friends can encourage us and help us. They pray for us and help us do our best. They can warn us when we do things we shouldn't do. They bring joy and blessing into our lives.

In what ways is Jesus like a best friend?

He is always there for us. He will help us, encourage us, forgive us, warn us and keep us from feeling alone. He wants us to be friends with Him, too. That is a wonderful privilege!

Following God meant that David's wife, Michal, left him. What should we do when someone we love leaves us because we are following Jesus?

We must keep our eyes on Jesus and ask Him to help us through the hurt and loss. We must forgive the person and still love them. We must pray they will want to put God first, too.

David had to forgive Saul and others who hurt him and tried to kill him. Is there anyone you need to forgive but haven't?

Answers will vary, Ask God to help you see them as God sees them and to be able to forgive.

David had been anointed king, but for 14 years he had to run for his life and hide in caves. Why did God allow that to happen?

David had to learn to follow and serve God no matter what before he could be a good king. He had to learn to trust God and be content. We all must learn to be content no matter what life is like for us (Philippians 4:11-13). We do that by not comparing what we have with others but thanking for all He has done for us. We trust that He knows what is best for us no matter what.

# **4. MRS. INSIDE OR MRS. OUTSIDE**

## **2 Samuel 6:16-23; 1 Samuel 25:1-42**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Have you ever done anything foolish? Everyone does. Sometimes disaster results, other times just humorous consequences. Instead of a hit or miss approach, God offers wisdom to help His children make the right decisions. David, the man after God's own heart, trusted God when faced by a bear, lion and giant. He patiently awaited God's timing to become king. However he also did some unwise things. Marrying his first wife was one of those things. It was foolish, not wise, and sad consequences followed it.

**MRS. OUTSIDE: The Queen whose love turned to scorn.** Our story starts with David visiting his brothers and taking up the challenge to fight Goliath. Saul promised to give his oldest daughter to the one who killed Goliath, but failed to do so for he became jealous of David's popularity. Still, he was pressured to keep his word so he gave David his youngest daughter, Michal, who was infatuated with David as the latest national hero. Michal was a spoiled, self-centered princess who got everything she wanted. Saul tried to use her to get rid of David, saying he'd have to have proof of killing 100 Philistines as his dowry for a princess. David came back with proof of 200 dead Philistines!

When Saul sent soldiers to murder David in his home, Michael helped him escape but then lied to her father to cover up her role (I Sam 19:11-17). She was a good, convincing liar, playing both sides against the middle to protect herself. She could have gone with David but didn't want to leave the king's court, so she married another man 'on the way up' since there didn't seem to be much of a future for David (I Sam 25:44).

During the next 14 years David, unfortunately, married several other women, including Abigail. When Saul died and the people wanted David for king, he demanded having Michal back for a wife as his condition for taking the crown (II Sam 3:14). She readily agreed, for David was now much more prestigious than her current husband. It broke his heart to see her go, and he followed her down the street crying (II Sam 3:15-16). Wanting her and taking her was not a wise move on David's part.

More time passed, and eventually David realized he had been foolish. Michal laughed and mocked him for his care-free worship and praise when he brought the ark back to Jerusalem (II Sam 6:12-23). She had no spiritual perception, no concern for David's joy. She only had pride in her own position. She rejected God and He rejected her, as did David (II Sam 6:23). She lived only for herself, and for her pleasure in the present. That is foolishness. It's like the man who tore down his barns to build more but died that night. Jesus called him a 'fool.' A fool puts today's pleasure over future good.

Wisdom is doing what is best in the long run, even if it isn't the easiest at the moment. We don't naturally have wisdom, but God gives it (James 1:5-8) through His Word (II Tim 3:15). A deep commitment to God and His values is necessary to have God's wisdom (Ps 111:10). Man's wisdom apart from God is ultimate disaster (I Cor 3:18; 2:6-16)

**Fools.** Some people do foolish things because they are naive, ignorant, don't know better (Hebrew 'pethi,' Prov 8:5; 14:15; 22:3; 27:12). Others are foolish because they don't do what they can to gain wisdom (Hebrew 'Kesil,' Prov 8:5; 10:1, 23; 13:20; 14:7; 17:10, 12). Worse are those who have knowledge and awareness of God's principles but reject them (Hebrew 'ewil,' Prov 1:7; 10:14; 12:16; 15:5; 17:28; 20:3). When this continues a person becomes proud, haughty and unteachable (Hebrew 'lits,' Prov 9:8, 13:1; 22:10). The final result is the one who even goes so far as to deny their being a God (Hebrew 'nabal,' Prov 17:21;

Psalm 14:1). It's interesting that David's second wife, who was a very wise woman, was married to a man with the Hebrew name 'Nabal,' or 'fool' (who goes so far as to reject God).

**MRS. INSIDE: The Queen who was both winsome and wise.** During David's 14 years in hiding his men helped Nabal, who was expected by rules of society to reward him (much as we are expected to leave a tip for a waitress today) (1 Sam 25:1-44). David was foolish and let his flesh rule. He took his men to kill Nabal and his household for the insult. However Nabal's wife, Abigail, a woman of both intelligence and beauty (verse 3), acted quickly and intervened. She sought to make the wrong right. She confronted 400 angry men bent on murder with words of peace and wisdom. She humbled herself and spoke respectfully to David. She talked to David as if he already knew and agreed with what she was saying, taking a positive approach instead of a negative, condemning approach. She was persistent and kept talking so David couldn't respond quickly in anger. God used her to protect innocent lives and to keep David from sin. David was wise enough to take her advice (Prov 4:1; 8:10, 33; 24:32; 25:12).

Later, when she told Nabal, he suffered a stroke and soon died. David had his revenge, but God got it instead. David then wisely married her. He had no other wife at the time. She should have been his one and only wife. All of his heartache, family problems and kingdom turmoil would have been avoided had he been wise enough to have her for his only wife. Just as David was a man after God's own heart, so she was a woman after God's own heart. They were both godly and wise, a fine pair indeed. They balanced each other nicely, David being more the extrovert and Abigail the introvert. They had a son together named Kileab which means 'God is my judge.' Obviously that was Abigail's tribute to God for taking care of her in her awful, abusive situation with Nabal.

**Wisdom or foolishness**, the choice is still ours. Doing what is short-sighted and self-centered brings negative consequences in the long run. Doing what is best for the future, based on the principles and values shown forth in God's Word, that is wisdom. Proverbs has much to say about wisdom. "Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice" (13:10). "He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm" (13:20). "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death" (14:12). "A mocker resents correction, he will not consult the wise" (15:12). "There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord" (21:30).

Are you open to and seeking for God's wisdom? Or do you just want to do what is easiest this moment? Remember Michal and Abigail. Michal had everything but lost it because of her self-centered foolishness. Abigail had nothing but because she did what was right in God's sight ended up with everything. You can't have both, it's either what the world offers or what God offers. The choice is yours. Make a wise one.

## **4. MRS. INSIDE OR MRS. OUTSIDE**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Michal was a princess who had everything she wanted. She was popular, rich and good looking. While there is nothing wrong with these things, they can keep us from putting God first. Why is that so?

Read 1 Peter 3:1-6. What does this say should have been of the most importance for Michal?

Why is it hard today to be more concerned about the person we are inside instead of how we look and what we have?

Why is someone like Michal called 'foolish'?

If you have time read 1 Samuel 25:1-42. If not recall what you can of the story of Nabal and Abigail. Make a list of all the good traits about her which you can find.

How would you define wisdom?

How can we get wisdom?

Give some examples of when it is important to have God's wisdom.

What lessons can you learn from Michal and Abigail that can apply to your life?

## **4. MRS. INSIDE OR MRS. OUTSIDE**

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Michal was a princess who had everything she wanted. She was popular, rich and good looking. While there is nothing wrong with these things, they can keep us from putting God first. Why is that so?

It's easy to put our faith and trust in what we have around us when we are rich and popular. People don't see their real need of God. Most of those who followed Jesus when He was on earth were the poor and struggling people. We can become self-centered and proud of our possessions. The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil (1 timothy 6:10; Hebrews 13:5).

Read 1 Peter 3:1-6. What does this say should have been of the most importance for Michal?  
A pure and reverent life and a gentle and quiet spirit – inner traits.

Why is it hard today to be more concerned about the person we are inside instead of how we look and what we have?

The world emphasizes appearance, status, possessions. Our tendency to sin causes us to compare ourselves with each other and get jealous or envious. God looks at the heart, not the appearance.

Why is someone like Michal called 'foolish'?

Because her values are wrong. She sees as important those things which are temporary and will soon end while ignoring that which will live forever. The person we are inside will live forever and is much more important than outer appearances.

If you have time read 1 Samuel 25:1-42. If not recall what you can of the story of Nabal and Abigail. Make a list of all the good traits about her which you can find.

She was, among other things, wise, polite, intelligent, a good leader, caring about other people, sensitive, godly, polite, made good decisions, treated her servants well, was humble, etc.

How would you define wisdom?

Wisdom is looking at things as God looks at them. Wisdom looks beyond the surface. Wisdom looks at what is best for the future, not what is most enjoyable right now.

How can we get wisdom?

Wisdom comes by learning the Bible for that shows us how God views things. Wisdom also comes by asking God to show us His truth through His Holy Spirit. We must ask God for wisdom and He will give it to us (James 1:5-8).

Give some examples of when it is important to have God's wisdom.

Answers will vary. It is important at all times. 'Little' decisions are as important as big decisions. We should ask God for His wisdom to guide all we do.

What lessons can you learn from Michal and Abigail that can apply to your life?

Answers will vary.

# **5. MERCY ME!**

## **1 Samuel 27:1-12; 30:1-8**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Everyone sins. If anyone says they don't they are lying (I John 1:8, 10). God's provision is the blood of Jesus, which is applied to our sin when we admit it and recognize that it is sin (I John 1:9). If we don't confess sin, then we slip into a state called 'backsliding' (a 'slide' because it is so easy to do and 'back' because it is going back to sin instead of ahead with God). God still mercifully awaits our return, like the father of the prodigal son. There are many examples in the Bible of those who have backslidden from God: Solomon, Jonah, Abraham, David -- yes, that's right, David. The man after God's own heart backslid. There is a 16 month period in his life when he actually abandoned God and lived with the enemy.

**1. DAVID WAS DISCOURAGED AND LOST FAITH IN GOD.** After killing Goliath David became so popular that Saul was jealous and tried to kill him. Even though God took care of him every day (I Sam 23:14), David got weary of the oppression and decided to give up (I Sam 27:1). We all have times we are weary of persevering and slip a bit in our commitment and zeal (Gal 6:9). David knew God's promises about being the king, etc., but instead believing them he became discouraged and went to live with the Philistines, the very ones he had been fighting for years. It was an act of leaving God (I Sam 26:19).

**2. DAVID ABANDONED GOD & HIS PEOPLE.** David moved to Gath, the very place Goliath was from! (I Sam 27:2-4). For the next 16 months (I Sam 27 - 30) there is no mention of David going to God for help. No psalms were written during this time. He did experience relief from the oppression of Saul, but Satan's payment for this was far greater than any 'benefits' David received. We know, too, that if we let up in our devotion to the Lord that life seems to be a bit easier for awhile. Satan and the flesh rise up against us when we oppose them, but when we give in they are pacified and life seems easier (for awhile). Worse yet for David, he brought all his followers with him. When we drift from God we influence others. When we backslide, we often take our family and friends with us! David forsook God, but God didn't abandon him (Mt 12:20). Still, "those who forsake the Lord shall come to an end" (Isa 1:28).

**3. DAVID ADAPTED TO LIFE WITHOUT THE LORD.** To live safely with the enemy one must become like the enemy. This is perhaps the lowest time in David's whole life. The sin with Bathsheba just fell into his lap and David went with it. This time of sin was planned, plotted and done with his entire free will. He lied to Achish, his benefactor and provider in Philistia (I Sam 27:6-8). David supported his followers by attacking people friendly to the Philistines, taking all their possessions, and killing every man, woman and child so the Philistines wouldn't find out. Then he'd say he had been raiding Jews (I Sam 27:9-12). It was because of this bloodshed that David was later forbidden to build God's temple.

David seems to be 'successful' in his backsliding, but the trap is about to shut. He fits in so well with the Philistines that he is invited to help them attack the Jews and King Saul (I Sam 28:1-2). David seems very glad to do so, and disappointed when God, in His mercy, bails him out and keeps him from having to fight his fellow Jews (I Sam 29:1-11). Even though David still hasn't repented, God still is merciful in His dealings with David.

Mercy is God's goodness manifested to those in misery or distress. God is rich in mercy (Eph 2:4; James 5:11). It is often translated as 'love' or 'compassion' (I Chron 16:34; Ps 57:10; Ps 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:4, 29). Mercy is not getting what we deserve.

**4. DAVID REAPED THE RESULTS OF LIFE WITHOUT GOD.** When David and his men returned after not having to fight the Jews, they found their town destroyed and their families and possessions carried off (1 Sam 30:1-4). Life without God is NOT better! David is rejected by the Philistine lords, he loses his family and possessions, and his friends all turn against him and talk of killing him (I Sam 30:6). This is what Satan had in mind when he first lured David away from God. Satan promises the best but delivers the worst! He is a liar and deceiver, and any who trust him end up regretting it! It is God who comes to David's rescue (Psalm 103:8-18) -- the very One he deserted to make life 'easier.'

**5. DAVID CAME TO HIS SENSES AND RETURNED TO GOD.** "But David found strength in the Lord his God" (I Sam 30:6). Repentance is the only solution to backsliding. Turning to God is what he should have done before going to the Philistines. The whole last 16 months would have been different, and he'd still have his family and possessions! David asked God for wisdom and help (I Sam 30:7-8). God showed him mercy and forgave him (Psalm 90:14). The same thing happened when he sinned with Bathsheba (II Sam 12:13) and when he disobeyed and took a census (II Sam 24:14).

God's mercy continued to be shown to David - He made it possible for David and his men to rescue their families and reclaim their possessions. David was so appreciative of God's mercy shown to him that he showed mercy to others -- something he didn't do during his 16 months away from God. While retrieving his family he came across an abandoned slave that belonged to his enemies. He could have killed him but he took care of him. Some of his men couldn't help in the battle with those who took their families, but David made sure they got their fair share of the possessions anyway.

He gave away much of the bounty to poor Jews. A good test to see if you are aware of God's mercy is to see how merciful you feel toward others. If you don't have mercy to others, you may not be in fellowship with God as you should be. When David was right with God he had mercy on others, when he wasn't right with God he didn't have mercy for others. The two are closely related. "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

GRACE	MERCY
Getting what we don't deserve	Not getting what we do deserve
To sinful man as guilty	To sinful man as miserable
Unmerited, undeserved favor	Compassion, pity, loving-kindness
Goodness to the ill-deserving (in sin or guilt)	Goodness to those in need (misery or distress)
Focuses on man as guilty	Focuses on man as miserable
God's attitude toward the law-breaker and rebel	God's attitude toward those in distress
Grace comes first I Tim 1:2; II Tim 1:2 Ti 1:4 II Jn 3	Mercy follows grace, only the forgiven can be blessed

Are you discouraged, thinking of quitting (or maybe you have already started in little ways)? Don't believe Satan's lie that life is better outside the Lord's camp! If you are backslidden you need to repent and confess your sin, calling on God for mercy. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

## **5. MERCY ME**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

David became discouraged because life was not going the way he thought it should. Do you get discouraged when things aren't going as you like? Tell about a time you got discouraged.

When David wasn't getting his own way he started doing things to take care of himself like lying, stealing and deceiving people. What sins are we tempted to commit when we don't get our own way?

Why does it seem that some who live this way are doing fine and that things are working out better for them now than before?

Why did David turn back to God when his family was taken and his possessions destroyed?

What is 'mercy.'?

How did God show mercy to David?

How has God shown mercy to you? Give an example of something good that happened to you which you didn't deserve?

Why does God delight to show mercy to us?

What lessons can you learn from this time in David's life?

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David became discouraged because life was not going the way he thought it should. Do you get discouraged when things aren't going as you like? Tell about a time you got discouraged.

Answers will vary.

When David wasn't getting his own way he started doing things to take care of himself like lying, stealing and deceiving people. What sins are we tempted to commit when we don't get our own way?

Answers will vary. We lie, steal, cheat, take advantage of others, get angry, feel sorry for ourselves, get disrespectful, etc. We stop praying and reading our Bible and leave God out of our plans. We live and act as if there is no God who loves us and has a plan for us.

Why does it seem that some who live this way are doing fine and that things are working out better for them now than before?

Satan lets them go because they are going the way he wants. He doesn't oppose them and demons leave them alone. God is patient. He doesn't force anyone but gives time for them to repent. Eventually it all catches up with them, though. David's family was kidnapped and all his possessions stolen (1 Samuel 30:1-4).

Why did David turn back to God when his family was taken and his possessions destroyed?

The consequences of our sins show us our need of God. We reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7-8). When we can no longer take care of ourselves we see we must turn back to God. God in His love for us allows things to get to the point where we see our need of Him.

What is 'mercy.'?

Mercy is God's goodness shown to those in misery or distress. When we deserve punishment for something we have done but don't get it, that is mercy.

How did God show mercy to David?

He allowed him to get his possessions and family back, He forgave him and restored him, He regained his close relationship with God, God blessed him and used him for God's will in Israel.

How has God shown mercy to you? Give an example of something good that happened to you which you didn't deserve? Answers will vary.

Why does God delight to show mercy to us?

He is a God of love and compassion. He cares about us and wants to see us blessed and not in misery. His very nature is to show mercy instead of judgment. He will judge those who reject Him but delights to do good things for His children.

What lessons can you learn from this time in David's life?

To not let discouragement turn us from God. To not take things into our own hands and think we can take better care of ourselves than God can. To turn back to God as soon as we find ourselves in sin.

## 6. OF LIFE AND OF DEATH

### **1 Samuel 28:1-20; 31:1-7**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Last words can be quite revealing. James Rodgers, when asked if he had a last request before facing a firing squad, said: "Why, yes, a bulletproof vest." Douglas Fairbanks' last words were "I never felt better." William Palmer who was hanged, said, when told to step on the scaffold's trap door, "Is it safe?" P. T. Barnum's last words were, "How were the receipts today?" You would think that being so close to death's door would sober a person into considering the prospect of facing his Maker, but that doesn't always seem to be the case.

It wasn't the case with Saul, king of Israel, either. His last words reflected his life: prideful and self-centered. The setting was the battle between the Jews and Philistines, the one that God in his mercy prevented David from participating in.

**THE BATTLE RAGES** The Philistines won a massive victory in that battle (I Sam 31:1), due largely to their use of iron (which the Jews didn't have). Forty years earlier God said this would happen if they insisted on having a king -- and God was right! Saul had just gone to a spirit medium for advice -- what a way to go face the Lord! Actually Saul and his 3 sons were killed in the retreat (I Sam 31:2-3). Saul was only wounded, then killed himself because he was afraid of what the Philistines would do to him if they captured him alive (I Sam 31:4-6). His last words were to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and run me through and abuse me" (v. 4).

**THE KING DIES** When the day started Saul had no idea he would die that day. God doesn't tell us ahead of time when it will be our last day. We don't know when we will die, just that it will happen. "It is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment." Death is an important part of life. If it weren't for death, people would live very differently! Preparation for death is an important part of preparation for life. Only those who are prepared to die are really prepared to live. We never know when it will be God's time for us to die, so need to always be ready. When one accepts Jesus as Savior one of the benefits is eternal life. Jesus took the sting of death (I Cor 15:55), so death is just a shadow (Psalm 23). Death brings a life far greater than this life to those who are God's people (Phil 1:21).

Saul, unfortunately, had none of this hope in his life. He ended up a suicide (I Sam 31:4-10). Ironically his body was hung on the wall of the same city where he had been anointed king! His life came full circle, ending up where he started -- nothing was gained during those 40 years. It was a waste for him and for the nation. A life lived out of fellowship with God always ends up empty.

**DAVID RESPONDS TO NEWS OF SAUL'S DEATH** When David and his men returned from rescuing their families and getting back their possessions, they found out about Saul's death (II Sam 1:1-10). Even though it meant they could return to Israel in safety, and David would be made king, still they mourned and wept. Saul's life had been wasted, David's good friend Jonathan was dead, the Jews were defeated and scattered, and God's reputation was shattered. That mattered more to David than his own gain of the throne. He wasn't self-centered, but truly a man after God's own heart (Prov 24:17; Mt 5:44-45).

Later that day David dealt with the messenger who came, claiming to have killed Saul and looking for a reward from David. For his deception and greed end up being killed (2 Sam 1:11-16). His greed led to death, much sooner than he expected it.

David then wrote a psalm of remembrance for Jonathan and Saul (II Sam 1:17-27). Saul's was seen as a wasted life, Jonathan as a good friend who will be missed. How will people feel when YOU die? What will they say? Will they miss you for the godly influence you had, or feel sorry for a life wasted on selfish living? NOW is the time to decide.

**THE DASH** If you have ever walked amid the graves of a cemetery you know that the headstones all have one thing in common. There are two dates, which vary, but they are separated by a single dash which represents the length of time the person lived. No information is given as to how the life was lived. It could have been a very selfish life, or a life lived for God and others. It's all wrapped up in the dash. One day, unless the Rapture comes first, your name and my name will be on a grave stone. There will be two dates and a tiny dash between them. What will that small horizontal line signify? You are writing the meaning of it right now...

*I read of a man who stood to speak  
at the funeral of his friend.  
He referred to the dates on her tombstone  
from the beginning . . . to the end.  
He noted that first came the date of her birth  
and spoke of the second with tears,  
but he said that what mattered most of all  
was the dash between those years.  
For that dash represents all the time  
that she spent alive on earth,  
and now only those who loved her  
know what that little line is worth.  
For it matters not, how much we own;  
the cars, the house, the cash.  
What matters is how we live and love  
and how we spend our dash.  
So think about this long and hard,  
are there things you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left.  
(You could be at "dash mid-range.")*

*If we could just slow down enough to  
consider  
what's true and what's real,  
and always try to understand  
the way other people feel.  
And . . . be less quick to anger,  
and show appreciation more  
and love the people in our lives  
like we've never loved before.  
If we treat each other with respect,  
and more often wear a smile,  
remembering that this special dash  
might only last a little while.  
So, when your eulogy is being read  
with your life's actions to rehash . . .  
would you be pleased with the things they  
have  
to say about how you spent your dash?*

*-Author Unknown*

## **6. OF LIFE AND OF DEATH** **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

Saul repeatedly disobeyed God because he thought he knew better and than God. He wanted to do things his way and not God's way. Why do people do that?

Are you afraid of death? Why or why not?

Who do you know who has died? How did you feel about their dying?

Why does God have us die, why not let us live on earth forever?

We must never try to contact demons as the witch of Endor was doing (1 Samuel 28:1-20). She and Saul were surprised when God sent Samuel to warn Saul so he would repent. Despite Saul being far from God, God was still merciful to him. Are you ever tempted to go to powers other than God for help and answers?

We only have one life to live so we want to live it right. What are some of the things God wants you to be doing during this life He has given you?

Do you think many people have regrets at the end of their life and wished they had lived differently?

If you have regrets about things in your past, what should you do about them?

Do you know what God wants you to do with your life? If so, what is it?

How can you know what God wants you to do with your life?

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Often we think we know better than God or we think God's way is too hard. In our pride we think we know best. We may not trust God enough to obey no matter what.

Are you afraid of death? Why or why not?

Answers may vary. We may dread the process of dying but not fear what happens after death.

Who do you know who has died? How did you feel about their dying?

Answers will vary.

Why does God have us die, why not let us live on earth forever?

Christians would never be reunited with God. Dying is our way of spending eternity with God. If there wasn't death those who aren't living for God would feel they can keep on doing whatever they want forever. Death reminds people that this life is temporary and short – and then they must face God.

We must never try to contact demons as the witch of Endor was doing (1 Samuel 28:1-20). She and Saul were surprised when God sent Samuel to warn Saul so he would repent. Despite Saul being far from God, God was still merciful to him. Are you ever tempted to go to powers other than God for help and answers?

Answers will vary.

We only have one life to live so we want to live it right. What are some of the things God wants you to be doing during this life He has given you?

He wants you to pray, trust Him, tell others about Him, give your time, talent and treasure to help His work, and worship Him. We are to love and forgive others, read our Bible and pray, and serve Him in any way He directs.

Do you think many people have regrets at the end of their life and wished they had lived differently?

Yes, many do.

If you have regrets about things in your past, what should you do about them?

Confess them and ask God to forgive you. Then commit your self to live for Him from now on.

Do you know what God wants you to do with your life? If so, what is it?

Answers will vary.

How can you know what God wants you to do with your life?

First, tell Him you want to do what He wants and you will obey Him whatever it is. Sometimes He puts a desire in our hearts to do something, other times He leads one step at a time, little by little.

# 7. JESUS IS LORD

## 1 Samuel 2:1-11;

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

C. S. Lewis once wrote: "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic -- on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg -- or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to." His point is well taken. Anyone who claims to be God, Creator of the universe and One who can forgive sin is either a LIAR for making such false claims, a LUNATIC for actually believing them or the LORD of the Universe. If He indeed is Lord, as the Bible claims Him to be, then it is up to us to make Him king of our lives now and forever.

**DAVID WAS ALSO A KING**, God's choice for the people, and an example of King Jesus, Who will one day sit on David's throne. Just as the people prospered when they willingly made David their king, so we prosper when we make Jesus king of our hearts. There are some very insightful lessons about making Jesus our king from the Jews making David theirs.

Saul and his sons have been killed by the Philistines, most of Israel is occupied by the Philistines who are oppressing the Jews. When David hears of this he doesn't rush off doing his own will, he asks God if he should return and offer himself as king (I Sam 2:1; Psalm 127:1). God tells David to return to Hebron, so David obeys. All the years of trials and persecution, of suffering and affliction have deepened David and made him godlier. Those 14 years were God's preparation to make him a godly king. He will be better, too, because he knows what the people he rules go through. Jesus, our king, knows what we go through for He went through it Himself (Heb 4:15-16).

When David returned, **SOME WERE QUICK TO MAKE HIM KING** (II Sam 2:4), just as some today are quick to make Jesus king of their lives. David didn't force himself, he offered himself as available and let it up to God. Jesus, too, doesn't force Himself on anyone. If Jesus will rule and reign in one's heart is a voluntary, free will choice of that person.

Not everyone, however, made him king. Abner, the commander of Saul's army, supported Ish-Bosheth (a weak son of Saul who was still alive) and put him on Saul's throne. All the tribes but Judah followed Abner. Jesus, too, has **COMPETITION FOR THE THRONE** in our lives. Satan offers other, more popular alternatives: money, things, power, popularity, prestige, family, relationships, lusts, fear, pride, sin, etc.

Unfortunately the result of having two kings was civil war -- fighting within the nation. That happens inside us when Jesus is not king over 100% of everything. For 7 1/2 years there was **INNER CONFLICT** in Israel (II Sam 2:12-32). Then Abner deserted Ish-Bosheth due to a fight over a concubine. He went to David and said he'd give him the throne of the northern tribes. Instead of trusting God's timing, David agreed on the condition he'd get Michal back as his wife. Abner was only thinking of himself and his power, but soon was killed and ended up with nothing. That is what happens when we try to run our own lives!

We often say that Jesus is first in our lives, but it is more of a figure-head position than really controlling every area of life. A man once stood up in an assembly of Christians in

England and told of the great blessings that he had received at a certain conference he had attended the week before. When asked to speak more specifically about what he had experienced, he said, "Well, I can say this: I was a Christian before I went. Christ was my king, but I am afraid He was a constitutional sovereign and I was a Prime Minister. In this country the queen gets the praise, but the Prime Minister runs the country. As a result of the conference, He now runs the country." Honestly ask yourself, who runs your country?

Ish-Bosheth was soon killed and the kingdom naturally passed to King David (II Sam 5:1-5). Finally, when David was the one and only king, was there **PEACE**. So, too, peace only rules in our hearts when Jesus is king over everything.

David's first act as king was the same as Jesus' when we make Him 100% king. Enemies are attacked and driven out (II Sam 5:6-7). Enemies in their midst for hundreds of years, which they couldn't dislodge in their own strength, are one by one defeated. If Jesus is the Lord of your life you should be seeing a **STEADY PROGRESSION OF VICTORIES** over the world, the flesh and Satan.

New ground was gained, the borders expanded, and the nation grew. That is what happens when we follow Jesus, too. However, it wasn't without opposition. When Jesus is on the throne, **THE ENEMY ATTACKS** to dislodge Him. The Philistines sent wave after wave of soldiers against David but God prevailed and there was victory over them (II Sam 5:18-25).

What lessons can we learn from when David was made King over Israel? First of all, like David, Jesus won't force Himself on you. It is your choice to allow Him to rule and reign in your heart. There will be other things trying to have first place, but until he is your 100% king there will be no peace. You will have inner toil and conflict. When He had total rule of your life then He will start to defeat your enemies. There will be opposition, but He will bring progressive and lasting victory in your life. However it all starts with making Him King of your life. Remember, He died to be your Savior but He lives to be your Lord. As the earth revolves around the sun, so should our lives also revolve around the Son.

When Queen Victoria had just ascended her throne she went, as is the custom of Royalty, to hear The Messiah rendered. She had been instructed as to her conduct by those who knew, and was told that she must not rise when the others stood at the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus. When that magnificent chorus was being sung and the singers were shouting "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," she sat with great difficulty. It seemed as if she would rise in spite of the custom of kings and queens, but finally when they came to that part of the chorus where with a shout they proclaim Him King of kings suddenly the young queen rose and stood with bowed head, as if she would take her own crown from off her head and cast it at His feet. Indeed, Jesus is Lord!

## **7. JESUS IS LORD**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

What are some of the similarities between David as King and King Jesus?

What are some of the differences between David as King and King Jesus?

What are some of the similarities between we who follow Jesus and those who followed King David.

There was civil war in Israel between David and his followers and Ish-Bosheth and his followers. What happens inside us until we let Jesus rein a King of our lives?

Read Romans 7:7-25. How does this describe Paul's struggle with sin before He makes Jesus lord and King of his life?

What was Paul's solution to this? How did he stop the civil war within and defeat sin?

If Jesus isn't king in our lives, we put ourselves on the throne. Who is on the throne in your life, yourself or Jesus? On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very little and 10 being totally, how much control do you let King Jesus have in your life?

What can you do to move closer to being a '10' in your life?

Who wants to rule as King in this world instead of Jesus?

## **7. JESUS IS LORD**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

What are some of the similarities between David as King and King Jesus?

Both were chosen and anointed by God. They are Jews and rule over Israel. Both were obedient to God and pleased Him. Both were committed to glorifying God.

What are some of the differences between David as King and King Jesus?

David was just a man while Jesus was man and God. David's reign was in the past, Jesus' in the future. David's is over, Jesus' will never end. David wasn't perfect but Jesus is.

What are some of the similarities between we who follow Jesus and those who followed King David.

Some were quick to make David king and others very reluctant. The same is true, even among Christians, Many who have accepted His free gift of salvation have a hard time letting Him rule in their hearts and over their lives as lord and King of their life.

There was civil war in Israel between David and his followers and Ish-Bosheth and his followers. What happens inside us until we let Jesus rein a King of our lives?

We have inner conflict and struggles as well. There is no peace or joy within.

Read Romans 7:7-25. How does this describe Paul's struggle with sin before He makes Jesus lord and King of his life?

He wanted to do good but found himself sinning instead. He couldn't live the holy life he wanted but kept doing wrong. He wasn't able to do what he wanted to do but found him doing what he didn't want to do. The problem wasn't God's law but Paul himself.

What was Paul's solution to this? How did he stop the civil war within and defeat sin?

Read Romans 8:1-4 the victory is in King Jesus, not in us. He conquered sin so we can only have that victory by Him. When we trust in Him, depend on Him, ask Him to take over and work through us, and go to Him for help whenever we struggle then we can have victory.

If Jesus isn't king in our lives, we put ourselves on the throne. Who is on the throne in your life, yourself or Jesus? On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very little and 10 being totally, how much control do you let King Jesus have in your life?

Answers will vary.

What can you do to move closer to being a '10' in your life?

Answers will vary, but should include trusting Jesus, praying, learning the Bible, confessing sin, being more like Jesus.

Who wants to rule as King in this world instead of Jesus?

Satan is the prince of the air, the power of this world (Ephesians 2:2). He wants to rule in our lives as well. King Jesus is greater, though (I John 4:4).

# **8. WHEN GOD SAYS “NO”**

## **2 Samuel 7:1-29**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

I really envy Moses, Elijah, Paul, and Jesus. They were people who relied on prayer as though it made a difference--as though it really was conversation with God. Exodus 33:11 says that “the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.” Elijah’s prayers affected the weather, Paul never stopped praying, and Jesus would sometimes pray all night (James 5:17; Colossians 1:9; Luke 6:12). Wow!

Undeniably, these prayer-filled lives encourage us to take all of our desires and distresses, praise and pleas, troubles and triumphs to God. They reinforce the expectation that God hears and answers our prayers, just as Jesus promised (John 14:13-14, etc.). Isn’t it exciting when God says “Yes” to our requests? I can’t think of anything that affirms God’s presence in my life more than receiving something for which I’ve prayed. But, not every sincerely offered prayer is answered in the affirmative. Sometimes God responds to our requests with a resounding “NO!” That often throws me into a tail spin! That’s when I question God, I question myself, and I question the validity of prayer!

But you remember that Moses, Elijah, Paul, and Jesus all heard God say “No.” When Moses wanted to go into the Promised Land, God said “NO!” When Elijah asked God to end his life, God said “NO!” When Paul asked to be rid of his “thorn,” God said “NO!” When Jesus asked if there were any way around the Cross, God said “NO!”

There are lessons to learn from these “no” answers, though. “No” to Moses underscored the importance of God’s holiness (Deuteronomy 32:51). “No” to Elijah meant God had more work for him to do. “No” to Paul served to protect him from destructive pride. “No” to Jesus meant that some suffering is unavoidable if sin is to be overcome. I guess the questions I need to ask when God says “No” are not whether there is a God, or if He cares, or even if I am truly His child. The questions I need to ask are, what does this ‘No’ teach me about myself and God’s will for my life?” Maybe hearing “No!” affirms God’s presence in my life as much as hearing “Yes.”

**DAVID, TOO, HEARD GOD’S FIRM “NO”** in answer to his requests. Sometimes it was because of his failure to obey God’s Word (as with the ox cart death -- II Samuel 6). Other times it was because God had something else in mind for David. When David wanted to build God a fine home in Jerusalem, God said “no!” David didn’t think it was right for him to have a fine palace and God dwell in an old tent (the tabernacle), so he asked God if he could build Him a fine home, but God rejected David’s offer (II Samuel 7:1-7; I Chronicles 17:3-4). Why?

Think of a single woman in her middle to late 30's has long wanted to be married and have a family, but has not found a Christian husband. She has poured her heart out to God for years asking Him to help her, but she has remained single. Now it is beginning to look like she will never find the husband she desires. Her dreams seem broken. Or picture the only child of a couple in their late 30's has leukemia. The doctors have given him less than 6 months to live. His parents and the members of the whole church have prayed without ceasing for the boy. Day by day, however, he has gotten worse. Finally he dies. Their dreams of a family die with him.

What about a young man who desires to be a missionary on a foreign field. He is sure it is the Lord's will. He sacrifices to get his training but when it is nearly complete, he falls ill. Both of his kidneys fail. His years of dreams for the mission field die as he is told that he will never be able to live in an area away from the medical attention he needs. Then there is the successful Christian businessman has long desired to build and support a Christian "halfway house" for

recovering drug addicts. It is the passion of his life. His plans have been made. Finally, construction starts on the new facility. His dream is about to be realized. Then, suddenly, his business takes a plummet. In a matter of several months he is financially wiped out. Not only does he lose his business, but his plans of service to the Lord are lost as well.

Each desired to do something for God, but God said 'no.' each is disappointed in their broken dreams. Perhaps you can add examples from your life or from the lives of friends. Just remember that **sometimes God says no** to things that are good and right from our perspective. The worst part is that **God doesn't always explain why** He says no. Later he told David that it was because of the blood he had shed, but at first there was no explanation. Just because He doesn't give us a good reason, though, doesn't mean He doesn't have one! You see, **God has His own plans**. And He doesn't have the same plans for everyone.

What is encouraging, though, is that God honored David's intentions, even if David couldn't carry them out (II Chronicles 6:7-8). When God says no to something, **it doesn't mean He doesn't appreciate your honorable intentions**, and He will reward you for your desires anyway. It's also important to remember that "no" doesn't mean God will quit using you in other ways. He **still used** David to bring Israel to its pinnacle as a nation, to write many Psalms, and to be an ancestor of the Messiah. Knowing all this, though, doesn't mean it will be easy to hear no.

David gives us a good example of how to **HANDLE DISAPPOINTMENT** when God says no. First of all, **go to God with it** (II Sam 7:18). Don't run from Him. Job lost everything, yet went to God for help. Jesus didn't answer the prayer of Mary and Martha to keep their brother Lazarus alive, still they went to Him for solace when he died. They had learned to **trust God as sovereign** (v. 18b). **God is wiser** than we are and has reasons we don't know about (v. 19-21). Often He has greater, more far-reaching plans than we do. David wanted to build God a home, but God wanted to build David a house for all eternity. The home David planned, which Solomon built, only lasted a few years, but the house God built David will last for all eternity. Perhaps some of David's reasons for wanting a house for God in Jerusalem were to have the security of having Him there. Many of the plans we make are for our own security, and by saying "no" God is telling us to place our security only in Him.

David knew to **praise, don't pout** when God told him no (v. 22-24). Paul and Silas did the same thing when God didn't answer their pray for release from prison. Also, David knew to accept God's will, not fight it (v. 25). Jesus tells us to pray "YOUR kingdom come, YOUR will be done." It's God's kingdom, not our kingdom that we should be concerned about.

How well we are doing with God's "no" is shown by if we are or are not **willing to do what God allows** (I Chronicles 22:1-5). David didn't complain, but asked God what else he could do. "If I can't get married, I'll help others who are." "If I can't have children, I'll help others with theirs." "If I can't go on the mission field, I'll pray for those who do go." "If my business fails, I'll help others make theirs a mistake." What is your response?

## **8. WHEN GOD SAYS “NO”**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

What did David want to do for God?

Why didn't God let him do it?

How did David feel about this?

How do you feel when God doesn't answer a prayer of yours?

Tell about a prayer of yours God hasn't answered?

What might be some reasons God didn't answer the prayer the way you wanted it answered?

Why doesn't God answer all our prayers?

What are some other reasons God might not answer our prayers?

How should we respond when God doesn't answer our prayers?

What does this teach us about how to pray for others?

Are any of your unanswered prayers causing you to doubt God? If so, what should you do?

Spend a few minutes praying, asking God how you should pray for those around you. Always pray letting God say 'no' if it isn't His will. Don't tell Him what to do!

## **8. WHEN GOD SAYS “NO”**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

What did David want to do for God?

He wanted to build a house for God, a permanent temple in Jerusalem.

Why didn't God let him do it?

God had other work for David and someone else to build the temple. David was a man of war and the temple was to be a place of peace, so God wanted Solomon to build it.

How did David feel about this?

He was disappointed but trusted that God knew best and was willing to do what God wanted. He still obeyed and followed God.

How do you feel when God doesn't answer a prayer of yours? Answers will vary.

Tell about a prayer of yours God hasn't answered? Answers will vary.

What might be some reasons God didn't answer the prayer the way you wanted it answered?

What we wanted wasn't best for the person, God has something even better, God wants to use it for His glory, He wants us to persevere in prayer, He will answer but not just yet, etc.

Why doesn't God answer all our prayers?

He knows what is best and what we want isn't always what He knows is best in the long run. He has plans for us and we need to trust that He knows best.

What are some other reasons God might not answer our prayers?

Sometimes He says 'No' because that is what is best for us. Other times He says "Wait" because He will answer but not for awhile. The timing isn't right and He wants us to grow spiritually. When we pray selfishly for something and it isn't what God wants us to pray for then He will say 'No.'

How should we respond when God doesn't answer our prayers?

We need to trust that God knows best and trust Him. He knows much more than we do. He knows the future like we know the past. He never makes a mistake.

What does this teach us about how to pray for others?

Instead of insisting God do something to make everything easier for the person, pray first and ask God what you should pray for. Seek His will, not just pray for what would make things easiest.

Are any of your unanswered prayers causing you to doubt God? If so, what should you do?

Continue to trust and obey Him no matter what.

Spend a few minutes praying, asking God how you should pray for those around you. Always pray letting God say 'no' if it isn't His will. Don't tell Him what to do!

# 9. WHEN GRACE COMES KNOCKING

## 2 Samuel 9:1-13

By Jerry Schmoyer, jerry@schmoyer.net

A man died and went to heaven where he met Peter at the Pearly Gates. Before he could enter Peter gave him a few questions to answer, telling him that he had to accumulate 1,000,000 points before he can go in. "So, how often did you go to church?" Peter asked. "I went every Sunday and Wednesday," replied the man. "That's one point," answered Peter. "One point? Wow! I figured it would be worth more than that." "And did you give any offerings?" asked Peter. "Yes, I gave 20% of all my income every week," answered the man. "Well, let's see," answered Peter, "that's worth 1 point. Did you do anything else?" "Well, right off hand, I can't think of a whole lot. I did mostly what I thought I was supposed to do." "Well, we'll give you 1 point for good behavior, but can't you come up with something else?" By this time, the man was completely flustered. He finally cried, "Well, I can't come up with anything else. It seems no one can enter heaven except by the Grace of God!" "1,000,000 points! Come on in!"

**GRACE** is one of the most beautiful words in the Bible. It's used over 200 times. The first is "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen 6:8) and the last "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" (Rev 22:21). Grace is unmerited, undeserved favor.

**DAVID IS A GOOD EXAMPLE** of God's grace in that God took a poor, young shepherd and made him the greatest man of his time and the greatest king Israel ever had. David is also an example of someone who shows grace to another as well. That's what we want to look at.

David was secure, successful and victorious in all he did. Life was easy. During a time of reminiscence he thought of his good friend Jonathan who died with Saul fighting the Philistines. He **REMEMBERS A PROMISE** he had made to not kill any of Jonathan's descendants (I Sam 20:14-17). Such a promise may seem strange to us, but Jonathan knew that, although he was the next in line for the throne, David was God's chosen king. He knew that meant he'd die. He also knew the custom was to kill all rival claimants to the throne in order for the next king to secure the throne for himself. David wondered if he had kept that promise completely. He wanted to do more than keep descendants of Jonathan's alive, he wanted to share his own prosperity and blessing with them.

Upon inquiring, he discovered that a son of Jonathan's named Mephibosheth was still alive so he called him to the palace (II Samuel 9:1-6). Now Mephibosheth had both feet crushed when he was 5 and his nurse dropped him fleeing the palace after Saul and Jonathan died (II Sam 4:4). He was living in fear of being found and killed (v. 7a). He had no peace. He could well have been bitter because David was ruling and living where his father should have ruled and where he should have lived. Besides, David was living with the Philistines when they attacked and killed his father. Also, he was living in "Lo-Debar" which means "place of desolation, barrenness." Life for him was empty.

Mephibosheth is a perfect picture of **MAN WITH OUT GOD**: living in fear of discovery and then under judgment, lacking peace, having a life that is empty and barren. God, like David, wants to reach out and change all that (John 3:16-17; II Peter 3:9) by showing His grace. The first thing we see about grace is that it is **freely given** (v. 7). David was looking for someone to show grace to. He sought out Mephibosheth, not the other way around. That's the way it is for us, too, for God seeks us out, we don't seek Him, we run from Him!

God's grace is freely given **to the undeserving**. Mephibosheth had no value or worth to David. Being crippled he couldn't do anything to earn grace or pay David back (II Samuel 9:8-13). Still, David lavished blessings on him. Salvation is a gift (Eph 2:8-10) and as such it can only be received. It is based on the work of another. We can only accept it. It is **on the merits of another**. David paid for the gifts, and gave them because of his love for Jonathan (II Sam 9:1). God blesses us because of His love for Jesus, who paid for all our blessings on the cross. **God's Riches At Christ's Expense**, that's grace. So grace is freely given to the undeserving on the merits of another **for the helpless**. Mephibosheth could not help himself, just as we in sin cannot (Rom 6:23; 5:6-8).

Notice, though, that even though David showed grace to Mephibosheth, sin was still present. He never forgot where he came from because his feet were still crippled. Still, he was accepted as an equal son in the family. Although sin was present, it was **covered** by grace. The garments David provided, the table and food that was over it -- these covered the crippling effects of sin. Our sin, too, is covered by Jesus' blood (I John 1:7; Eph 2:13; Heb 9:14). What a blessing that is for us!

As you can imagine, that filled Mephibosheth with **gratitude** to David. Even when Zeba lied and convinced David that Mephibosheth was a traitor and trying to take the throne, he still was faithful in his love to David (II Sam 16:1-4). His love and faithfulness wasn't conditional on what David did for him. Eventually the wrong was righted (II Sam 19:24-30) and everything was returned to Mephibosheth, but all he cared about was that David was all right. David's seeking out and showing grace to Mephibosheth is a beautiful example of how He seeks us out to show us His grace, too.

Once upon a time a young woman found herself living with a stepmother and step sisters, all who hated her and used her. They convinced her she was worthless and not good enough to be loved. But when the prince held a ball hope sprung up in her heart and, by a miracle, she was able to meet the prince. He fell deeply in love with her, but she feared he'd reject her as unworthy so she fled his presence. She even hid from him, believing her past too bad for him to love her. Finally he finds her and she accepts his love and lives happily ever after. While that sounds like the story of Cinderella, it is actually the story of all God's people. Convinced by Satan and his forces that we are unworthy, we by some miracle still end up meeting the King's Son who we find loves us. Such love seems too good to be true, though, so we flee, believing Satan's lies that we aren't good enough. We hide until he seeks us out to reaffirm His unconditional love for us. When we respond to that grace we truly live happily ever after with Him.

Where are you in that story? Have you ever met the Prince and experienced His love? Are you running from Him, convinced that you are worthless and beyond help? Either way, He invites you to come to Him. More than that, He is seeking after you, if only you'll accept His love and stop running from Him. That's the only way you'll be 'happy ever after.'

## **9. WHEN GRACE COMES KNOCKING**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

David made a promise to be kind to Jonathan's family (1 Samuel 20:14-17). He remembered and kept his promise. Why is it important to keep our promises?

Tell about a promise you made to God or others that you kept.

Are there any promises you made to God or others you didn't keep? If so, what should you do now?

What acts of kindness and mercy did David do for Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:1-13)?

Have you shown mercy to anyone and helped them when in need? Has anyone done that to you or your family? If so tell about it.

Why does God want us to show mercy to those in need?

Is there someone you know that you can show mercy to or help sometime soon?

In what was Mephibosheth like someone before they come to Jesus?

What did Mephibosheth do to earn or deserve David's mercy?

What can we do to earn or deserve God's mercy (?)

What did Mephibosheth do in response to David's mercy?

What can you do to show God how grateful you are for all He has done for you?

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David made a promise to be kind to Jonathan's family (1 Samuel 20:14-17). He remembered and kept his promise. Why is it important to keep our promises?

Our integrity is based on keeping our word. It is part of being honest, dependable and trustworthy. It shows what our inner character is like. Even if it is hard, promises must be kept.

Tell about a promise you made to God or others that you kept. **Answers will vary.**

Are there any promises you made to God or others you didn't keep? If so, what should you do now?

If possible try to keep the promise now. Apologize to any people involved and confess it as sin to God (1 John 1:9)

What acts of kindness and mercy did David do for Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:1-13)?

He didn't kill him (new kings would kill anyone who had a claim to throne so they wouldn't be challenged). He gave him everything that King Saul had, making him very rich. David had Mephibosheth eat at his table, that means be part of his daily family activities. What a change for someone who was hiding and fearing for his life.

Have you shown mercy to anyone and helped them when in need? Has anyone done that to you or your family? If so tell about it. **Answers will vary.**

Why does God want us to show mercy to those in need?

We become more like Him when do this. By helping those He loves we are doing it for Him (Matthew 25:34-45).

Is there someone you know that you can show mercy to or help sometime soon?

**Answers will vary.**

In what was Mephibosheth like someone before they come to Jesus?

He was living in fear and under judgment. He didn't have peace and alone. Life was empty.

What did Mephibosheth do to earn or deserve David's mercy? **Absolutely nothing.**

What can we do to earn or deserve God's mercy (?)

**Absolutely nothing (Ephesians 2:8-9), He loves us no matter what, unconditionally.**

What did Mephibosheth do in response to David's mercy?

He loved him and was faithful to Him even when others turned against David.

What can you do to show God how grateful you are for all He has done for you?

Loyally follow Him no matter what others do, thank Him, and tell Him you love Him. Tell others about Him.

# **10. A FALL FROM A ROOFTOP**

## **2 Samuel 11:1 – 12:13**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

How are people to respond when their national leader who claims to follow God, gets involved in sexual sin, then abuses his power by trying to cover up that sin with lies? How does that affect a nation? It is devastating: for the person, his family and his nation. That's what happened to David, the man after God's own heart.

**COVER-UPS** The story starts with a pattern of covering up sin. At age 17 when he panicked and fled from Saul, David had his friend Jonathan lie to cover up for his being missing. Then he lied to Abimelech, the priest, so he would help David. For doing so, Saul killed Abimelech and 85 other priests. He fled to the enemy Philistines, and pretended he was insane so they would let him live there and not kill him. Finally, after much time in a cave, David confessed his sin (1 John 1:9), repented and was restored. Psalm 34 may be about this.

A few years later, still while hiding from Saul, David's fear again gets the best of him and he again flees to Philistia to hide. Through trickery, deceit and half-truths he got his own city, Ziklag. To feed the thousands who are joining him David takes his men raiding to steal food and possessions. Then to make sure the Philistines don't find out he is taking from their allies he has every man, woman and child killed. Again his deceit and cover-up of sin results in innocent deaths. David wanted to join the Philistine army when they fought the Jews, but some of their generals didn't trust him so he went back to Ziklag. When he got there he found someone had raided Ziklag and taken all the women, children and possessions captive. What goes around comes around. When out of God's will awful things happen. We reap what we sow. We end up being treated as we have treated others. David recognized his sin, confessed it, and God forgave and restored him. God had mercy and helped them get their families back.

Because Saul and his sons were killed in the battle between the Philistines and Jews, David was wade king. Eventually he brought peace to the land as well as prosperity. He was popular and loved by all. He set up the Ark in Jerusalem, wrote Psalms and led the nation in praise and worship to God. He and his nation were rich and successful. Success can be very dangerous, and for David it was deadly. The sin that resulted is the second most well-known in history, right after that of Adam and Eve in Eden.

**CIRCUMSTANCES OF SUSCEPTIBILITY.** Instead of going to war with his army as he should have, David stayed home to enjoy his success (2 Samuel 11:1). Satan always seemed to get David after a time of success. After killing Goliath and becoming immensely popular he ran in fear of Saul and his cover-up ended in the deaths of innocent priests. After resisting the temptation to kill Saul twice he again ran in fear and covered up by killing innocent people he robbed. . Now after his greatest success, bringing Israel to its greatest pinnacle ever, he will sin and, in fear try to cover it up, leading to the death of one of his most faithful supporters. It's important to know how Satan sets traps for you. Watch those patterns so you can avoid them.

Having innocently stumbled upon a very beautiful naked women bathing in her courtyard (v. 2), instead of immediately fleeing the temptation (as Joseph did) he looked and lusted. Jesus says that is sin the same as committing the act (Mt 5:28). Temptation isn't sin, but when thoughts are allowed to remain and become fantasies, that is sin. For women this applies more to fantasies of romance and love (soap operas, gossip, romance novels, etc.). Both sexual and romantic fantasies show dissatisfaction with life and an escape to unreality. It's an illegitimate way of meeting legitimate needs, needs that only God and mate can meet.

This, too, was the culmination of a life-long pattern of sin in David's life, one that started 30 years ago when he was 20. David always was a lusty, sensual person. Despite God's command, he was not satisfied with one wife but took one after another, they numerous other wives and concubines when he became king. He had developed a pattern of feeding his sexual desires instead of controlling them. Satan had been working 30 years to set this trap of sexual sin and then cover-up, and it worked!

Satan knows we won't go out and commit an awful sin, but may more easily commit an act of 'little' sin. Each step the sin slowly grows. If you put a live frog in boiling water it will immediately jump out. But if you put it in cold water and heat it at a rate of .0036 of a degree per second the frog won't notice but will be dead after 2 1/2 hours. Sin starts small and slow in us, but gradually grows. Satan is patient. He plans far ahead. He is very successful. As good as Satan is, though, there is no excuse to sin. God doesn't allow us to be tempted beyond what we can resist and always gives us a way to escape the sin (1 Cor 10:13).

**COMPLICATIONS OF SECRECY** When it became evident that Bathsheba was pregnant (v. 4-5), David went into his cover-up mode instead of admitting and confessing the sin. First he brought Uriah back from the war and tried to have him sleep with his wife (6-8) but he was too loyal to God and his fellow soldiers to do such a thing. Even when David got him drunk he refused (9-13) to sleep with his wife, thus not providing the explanation for Bathsheba's pregnancy that David wanted. To make sure his sin wasn't found out, David had Uriah put in the front lines of the next attack and had to other soldiers withdraw so he would be killed (v 14-27). It was nothing but murder. Again David's sin and attempted cover-up ended in innocent death. What a sad ending for a noble man like Uriah.

**CONSEQUENCES OF SIN** While it might have seemed to David that he had 'gotten away' with his sin, that wasn't so. Bathsheba and David's friends knew, and their respect was gone. His sons ended up doing similar things themselves. Enemies mocked David and God (12:14). Mainly, though, God was displeased (11:27b; Num. 32:23). Inside David was miserable (Psalm 32:3-4), and for about a year he was away from God. Then God sent Nathan the prophet, a man David highly trusted and respected. When confronted with his sin, David confessed and repented (II Samuel 12). His repentance is expressed in Psalm 51 and 32. While consequences of his sin still remained, he was forgiven and restored.

An old clock that stands in a corner once had a beautiful chime; now it has a harsh metallic sound. A bit of broken spring fell against the chime while it was being repaired, and this little piece of metal is causing all the discord. As soon as this bit is removed, the hour will strike again in a rich, full tone. Is there discord in your life? It takes but a bit of anything to deaden the note of joy. Whatever it is, great or small, it may be removed by yieldedness to our Lord Jesus Christ. David knew where to go when he cried, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation..." (Psalms 51:12).

## **10. A FALL FROM A ROOFTOP**

### **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

David should have been leading his troops in battle but instead stayed back. When we aren't where God wants us to be we are open to temptation and sin. Can you think of others examples of this in the Bible?

Can you think of examples today which show this same principle, when disobedience leads to temptation and disobedience?

David couldn't help seeing Bathsheba. It just happened. Sometimes we see, hear or think things which we didn't want to. We are tempted. What should we (and David) do as soon as this happens?

Read James 1:13-16. What do these verses say about temptation and resisting it?

What does I Corinthians 10:13 say about temptation and sin?

Instead of admitting his sin, David made matters much worse by trying to hide it and blame it on others. Why do we also do this?

Do you ever lie or deceive to cover up for something you did wrong? Do you blame others for things you have done? If so, pause now and quietly pray asking God to forgive you. You will have to apologize to anyone who knows you lied or was blamed for something they didn't do.

Psalms 51 and 32 are written by David about his sin and forgiveness. Read them if you have time. David confessed and was forgiven, but he had a more difficult time forgiving himself. Do you have a hard time forgiving yourself when you sin?

If there is any sin in your life you haven't confessed, do so now silently. Accept God's forgiveness, too.

# **10. A FALL FROM A ROOFTOP**

## **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

David should have been leading his troops in battle but instead stayed back. When we aren't where God wants us to be we are open to temptation and sin. Can you think of others examples of this in the Bible?

Samson should never have gone to the Philistines for a wife. Lot shouldn't have gone down to live in Sodom. Jesus told the disciples to flee when He was arrested but Peter followed and denied Him. Saul never should have gone to the witch of Endor. There are many others as well.

Can you think of examples today which show this same principle, when disobedience leads to temptation and disobedience? **Answers will vary.**

David couldn't help seeing Bathsheba. It just happened. Sometimes we see, hear or think things which we didn't want to. We are tempted. What should we (and David) do as soon as this happens?

**Being tempted isn't sin, but if we entertain the thoughts and let them grow they will result in sin.**

Read James 1:13-16. What do these verses say about temptation and resisting it?

**God doesn't tempt us to sin, He allows it to give us an opportunity to trust Him and grow. Sin starts as a thought within and then grows. Sometimes this happens slowly, other times quickly.**

What does I Corinthians 10:13 say about temptation and sin?

**We are all tested and tempted but we don't have to get in. God can strengthen us and provide a way to escape it, often by running from it like Joseph did from Potiphar's wife.**

Instead of admitting his sin, David made matters much worse by trying to hide it and blame it on others. Why do we also do this?

**Our pride keeps us from wanting to admit we did wrong. It's easier to deny it or blame it on others. We must receive God's forgiveness and mercy.**

Do you ever lie or deceive to cover up for something you did wrong? Do you blame others for things you have done? If so, pause now and quietly pray asking God to forgive you. **You will have to apologize to anyone who knows you lied or was blamed for something they didn't do.**

Psalms 51 and 32 are written by David about his sin and forgiveness. Read them if you have time. David confessed and was forgiven, but he had a more difficult time forgiving himself. Do you have a hard time forgiving yourself when you sin?

**When we don't forgive ourselves but God forgives us we are wrong. We are denying God's mercy and saying we know better than God. In effect we say God is wrong for forgiving us. Of course we don't deserve to be forgiven, it is always by mercy. God not only forgives, He forgets and to Him it's like we never sinned!**

If there is any sin in your life you haven't confessed, do so now silently. Accept God's forgiveness, too.

# **11. REBOUNTING FROM SIN**

## **1 Chronicles 28:1-11, 20-21; 29:10-30**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

If David could write one more Psalm, right now, in heaven, imagine how glorious it would be? With all his ups and downs behind him, and Jesus in front of him, I'm sure he would go on and on praising God for His greatness and majesty, His patience and mercy, His love and power. Throughout his whole life on earth, God was with David and David was with God. "A man after God's own heart," he had great times of victory and terrible times of sin and failure. The one that had the most impact was his sin with Bathsheba.

From then on his life, his family, and his kingdom started going down hill. The baby died. Rebellion became part of his family. Amnon raped his half-sister Tamar and, when David didn't do anything about it, Absalom took matters into his own hands and killed Amnon. Eventually Absalom ended up starting a civil war and driving his father from the throne and from Jerusalem. It made David miserable (Psalm 55:4-8). Still, he submitted to God's will with a good attitude.

"If I find favor in the Lord's eyes, He will bring me back and let me see it (Jerusalem) and His dwelling place again. But if He says, 'I am not pleased with you,' then I am ready; let Him do to me whatever seems good to Him." (II Sam 15:25-26). This was the attitude that characterized the rest of David's life on earth. It was this attitude that gave David peace through his final years, and even when he died. He knew God was sovereign and it was He, not Absalom that was in charge. If God wanted David restored it would happen, if not it wouldn't. No army can overcome God's will. He trusted God's wisdom and committed his fate to God, no matter what God had for him. He could do this because he trusted God's love and knew God did what was right and best for Himself and for David (Hebrews 12:5-11).

Still, he persevered doing what he felt God would have him do (Gal 6:7-9). Absalom's revolt was put down and Absalom killed. A Jew named Sheba later revolted and was defeated. David had victories over the Philistines and continued working on plans for the temple. He wrote Psalms and led the nation in praise and worship to God. He even went out of his way to undo the wrongs which Saul had done to the Gibeonites.

But no one lives forever on this earth. There comes a time for each one to die. Life is temporary. It is short. Soon it's David's turn to die. He died as he lived -- trusting in God and trying to be faithful to Him.

When he knew he was dying he called the top men in Israel together to have a final talk with them (I Chronicles 28:1). What a time this must have been! Many of these men were old, too. Some had been with David for 40 years, since his days at Ziklag. When David addressed them the first thing he talked about was the one thing in life he wanted to do more than anything else -- build the temple for God (I Chronicles 28:2-3). Still, God said "No" to that and David accepted. There was no bitterness in him. Oh that we would come to the end of our days and look back at our lives, having been content with what God chose for us instead of being disappointed and bitter at what He didn't do. An attitude of contentment is very important to have (Phil 4:11; I Tim 6:6). He was content because his whole outlook was ahead, looking to

heaven. He wasn't trying to do his 'thing' on this earth, he just wanted to do whatever God wanted him to do, knowing this life is very short.

David then went on to encourage his listeners to follow God in all they did (v. 8-9). He encouraged them to support Solomon in building the temple for God (10-11, 20) for this was still upmost in his heart. Later he had a private time alone with Solomon, encouraging him, too, to live for God alone (I Kings 2:1-4). I'm sure those words had a strong impact on his listeners. The dying words of a person are always listened to, for they aren't wasted on trivial matters. Paul's closing words were similar (II Timothy 4:6-8).

David's final years were spent in peace. His final days were in peace. He died in peace. I like the way God puts it what He says that David "rested" with his fathers (I Kings 2:10-12). Death is the ultimate rest for God's children, for those who have accepted His free gift of salvation in Jesus. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15). "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord" (Rev 14:13). For God's children death has no fear, for we know God will be with us when the time comes. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4)

While the experience of death may be physically painful, God promises that emotionally and spiritually His peace will be with us and we have nothing to fear. Until we come to grips with death we won't be able to truly live. A person isn't ready to live until they are ready to die. Death is nothing to fear because it isn't the end. It's really just the start. The best is yet to come! "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8). When we die our work is finished, but our life is just beginning! David's death ended his work but not his life. He is more alive now than when he walked on this earth! Some thing when we die we go from the land of the living to the land of the dying. The opposite is true. THIS is the land of the dying, next comes the land of the living! David is more alive than when he walked on this earth. He continues to live, praising and worshipping the God he loved and served.

Someone noted that our view of death is like a group of mourning caterpillars carrying a cocoon like a corpse. Above there is a beautiful butterfly inside the cocoon staring down in unbelief. When a person goes on an airplane we watch until the plane is out of sight, then we say, "Well, they're gone now." They may be gone from our presence, but they still continue to live. They are gone from us, but they aren't 'gone.' David is gone from this earth but he isn't 'gone.' He lives and he always will!

That is the assurance God provides for all His children as well. We may die, the real 'us' is never dead. We, too, will live forever because Jesus conquered sin on the cross.

# **11. REBOUNding FROM SIN**

## **QUESTIONS TO ANSWER**

By Jerry Schmoyer, [jerry@schmoyer.net](mailto:jerry@schmoyer.net)

David wrote most of the Psalms in our Bible. Which is your favorite Psalm and why?

If you would write a Psalm, what would it be about? What would the first few lines say? (You can take time to write a Psalm of praise to God, then read it to the others.)

Sin has consequences (Galatians 6:7-9). David suffered many consequences from his sin with Bathsheba and trying to cover it up. God forgives sin but doesn't always remove the consequences. Why?

What are some of the consequences, the problems David faced in the later years of his life?

Still, God was faithful to David because he was a man after God's own heart (! Samuel 13:14). What does that phrase mean? How can we tell if we are 'after God's own heart'?

What can you do to be more a person after God's own heart? Where do you have the hardest time being like Jesus in all you think, say and do?

Despite all the problems David had peace. How can we get peace within?

When you talk to David in heaven, what are some questions you would like to ask?

What are some lessons from the life of David that stand out in your mind?

What can you learn from David to help you live a better life for God today?

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Sin has consequences (Galatians 6:7-9). David suffered many consequences from his sin with Bathsheba and trying to cover it up. God forgives sin but doesn't always remove the consequences. Why?

He has lessons to teach us and others. He doesn't want us to think we can sin, confess, and everything be fine – if so we'd more prone to sin a lot. Consequences keep us humble and depending on God as well. They remind us that God is holy. Breaking laws of nature or our government have consequences as well.

What are some of the consequences, the problems David faced in the later years of his life?

His family, life and kingdom went downhill. The baby with Bathsheba died. A son raped his sister. Another son, Absalom, rebelled and tried to kill David and take the throne.

Still, God was faithful to David because he was a man after God's own heart (! Samuel 13:14). What does that phrase mean? How can we tell if we are 'after God's own heart'?

It means David loved the things God loved and felt about life and values as God did. His thoughts, values, priorities and motives were close to what God's are. This happened because He loved God, learned His Word and applied it to his life and thoughts.

What can you do to be more a person after God's own heart? Where do you have the hardest time being like Jesus in all you think, say and do?

Answers will vary.

Despite all the problems David had peace. How can we get peace within?

Peace is a fruit of God's Spirit, something He produces in our hearts when we love and obey God. Make sure there is no sin in your life and ask for His peace. Keep your eyes on Him and trust Him. Don't look at circumstances, don't fear. Just trust and you'll have peace.

When you talk to David in heaven, what are some questions you would like to ask?

Answers will vary.

What are some lessons from the live of David that stand out in your mind?

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What can you learn from David to help you live a better life for God today?

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